

WANDSWORTH COMMON CONSERVATION AREA DRAFT APPRAISAL E) ALMA TERRACE

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## 1 Introduction

**1.1** This document identifies and appraises the special architectural and historic characteristics of the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area Sub Area e) Alma Terrace and it also gives practical guidance on the implications of conservation area status. It is in two parts: a Character Statement and a Management Strategy. The Character Statement provides factual information regarding the Conservation Area. The Management Strategy gives specific planning guidance and enhancement advice.

**1.2** Conservation areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967 to safeguard areas of "special architectural or historic interest." Wandsworth Common Conservation Area Sub Area e) Alma Terrace was designated a Conservation Area on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1986 and further extended on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1989.

**1.3** This Appraisal has been produced in accordance with government guidelines in PPG 15, and the English Heritage Guidance notes of August 2005. These state that local planning authorities need to define and record the special interest, character and appearance of all conservation areas in their care. The intention of this Appraisal is to provide clearly defined analysis of the character and appearance of the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area Sub Area e) Alma Terrace, which is defensible on appeal, and can be utilized in development control decisions. In addition, the Management Strategy addresses issues, which have been identified in the character appraisal, for the enhancement and preservation of the conservation area. The Draft Appraisal will go through public consultation, be amended accordingly and submitted to the Planning Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2008.

**1.4** It is important to note however that no appraisal can be completely comprehensive and the omission of a particular building, feature or open space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

## 2 Character Analysis

**2.1** The special appeal of this area is the fusion between the dominating Grade II listed Wandsworth Prison, the humbly expressed late Victorian cottages located on Alma Terrace and other similar though less elaborate and larger scaled buildings along Heathfield Square. An unusual grouping but successfully combined within this relatively small section of the conservation area. Properties along Alma Terrace tend to have small front and rear gardens, with prominent views towards the Common.



**Picture 2.1 Wandsworth Prison**



**Picture 2.2 Alma Terrace**



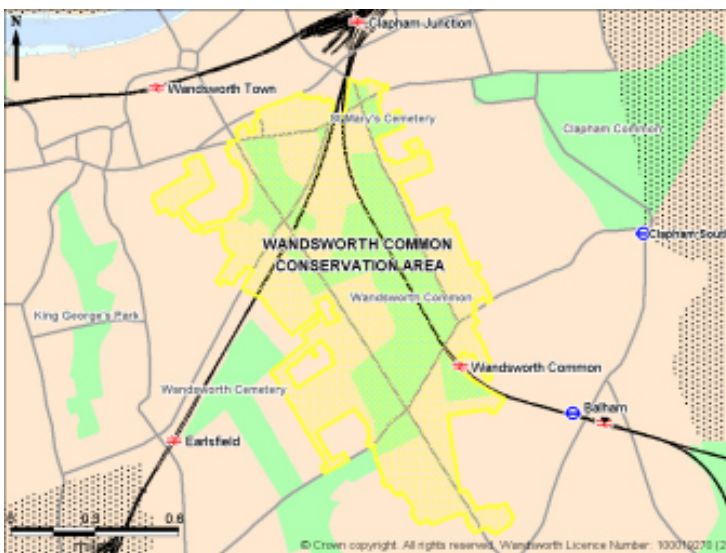
**Picture 2.3 Heathfield Road**

### 3 Location and Setting

**3.1** Wandsworth Common Alma Terrace (sub area E) lies on the west side of Wandsworth Common Conservation Area, sandwiched between the central (eastern) edge of the Common, Heathfield Road and Heathfield Square, the character area has a linked interrelationship with Sub Area D. The layout of sub area E is a combination of three key streets in the form of, the widespread prison arrangement and two short groups of residential building development, located along Heathfield Road and Heathfield Square. When approaching this area of Heathfield Road, the presence of the prison is immediately observed - the impact of which is softly offset by residential properties neatly tucked away on Alma Terrace and the green aspect of the Common. The County Arms Public House located at the corner of Alma Terrace and Trinity Road is distinctive in terms of its architecture and positively adds to the character of the sub area.

**3.2** The Common in contrast with the distinctive architectural language expressed by the prison mainly dominates this part of the character area – the contribution made here is of a unique townscape.

**3.3** Further contributions made by street trees, hedges and gardens are a large factor in the areas' charm. Although the majority of these properties have small front gardens, they are often well landscaped with mature trees and other vegetation. Street trees are common in most streets.



**Map 3.1 Location Map**

## 4 Townscape and Topography

**4.1** A small part of the common is located within this character area; nonetheless, the contribution made here is positive and distinctive in terms of its presence. When approaching this Sub Area from Heathfield Road, the scenery is abruptly changed by the dominant presence of the listed Wandsworth prison, the impact of which is offset by the presence of the Common and other low scale residential properties located nearby.

**4.2** Contributions made by street trees, hedges and gardens are a great factor in the attractiveness of the areas' greenery. Although the majority of properties have small front gardens, they are often well landscaped with mature trees and other vegetation. Street trees are common in most streets.

**4.3** The layout of Sub Area E is a combination of streets in the form of short groups of building development – some streets forming grided patterns around the prison. The combined quality of the buildings within the conservation area creates a cohesive and special townscape.

## 5 Historic Development and Archaeology

**5.1** In 1851 the Surrey County Prison had been established on land adjacent to the Common to the west of Trinity Road. Nearby a small community had developed with Alma Terrace, the County Arms and a few villas fronting on to Trinity Road. There were also a number of estates, Burntwood House, Burntwood Lodge, and Burntwood Grange. West of Trinity Road, to the north of the London to Southampton railway, Heathfield Cottages had been established prior to 1830. In the vicinity were a number of isolated villas and market gardens and on the common a large lake with islands known as the Black Sea, which was likely to have originally been a gravel pit.

**5.2** For a detailed account of history, please refer to the main Character Appraisal Introduction. This part of the conservation area does not fall within an Archaeological Priority Area.



**Picture 5.1 Wandsworth and District with 1865**

## 6 Buildings and Materials

**6.1** The precinct of Wandsworth Prison and the adjacent group of cottages in Alma Terrace form a distinct sub-area. The main prison was built in 1849-51, and the three main buildings are included in the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest (Grade II). Architect D.R. Hill designed all three buildings.

**6.2** Refer to Listed Buildings section for full details regarding:

- The prison
- The Prison Governor's House
- The Prison Doctor's house

**6.3** To the south and west of the prison enclosure lie terraces of two storey flats. They are of yellow stock brick construction with gabled centerpiece to front elevation. Timber sash windows are divided into twelve lights. Overall they are simple in composition. Properties in Heathfield Square form the east side of a large square.



**Picture 6.1 Alma Terrace**



**Picture 6.2 Heathfield Gardens**

**6.4** The plethora of projecting satellite dishes and Close-circuit Television (CCTV) detracts from the unified appearance of the front elevation. There is some untidy vacant land, which detracts from the qualities of this part of the conservation area.

**6.5** Alma Terrace is a unified group of fourteen cottages built around 1850, of yellow stock brick construction. The whole is unified by a projecting three storey gabled centrepiece and parapet to roofs. Neals nursery nearby has been long established and represents a vestigial part of what were extensive market gardens in this area.



## 7 Listed Buildings

**7.1** The key historic asset within this area is Wandsworth Prison. This section describes the architectural detailing of the building. All three heritage assets were designed by architect D.R. Hill in 1849-51.



**Picture 7.1 A drawing of the prison shortly after it was built**

### **Wandsworth Prison Gatehouse, Heathfield Road, London Grade II Listed, (Ref: LB/069; Listed 07- 04-1983)**

**7.2** The prison comprises a 3-bay composition with Cyclopaean detailing and comprising a low arched entrance bay flanked by twin windowed 3-storey towers. It is of pale gault bricks with stone dressings. The round-headed arch has a triple-stepped architrave interrupted by vermiculated keystone and voussoirs. It is flanked by rusticated pylons rising to a cornice and blocking course, the cornice modillioned above the arch. The windows of the towers are round-headed, the architraves having impost blocks and keystones. Each tower rises to a modillion cornice and blocking course. The pylons flanking the centre bay are repeated at the outer angles of the towers.

### **Wandsworth Prison Governor's House, south-east of main gate, Heathfield Road, Grade II Listed, (Ref: LB/070; Listed 07-04-1983)**

**7.3** The Governor's House consists of massive Italianate asymmetrical composition in 3 major bays in pale gault bricks and stone dressings. High basement with flight of steps to recessed 2-storey entrance between left-hand 3-storey tower of coupled sashes and right-hand 2-storey block of triplet sashes. Door enclosed in glazed lean-to porch. Windows round-arched with jambs, vermiculated imposts and key blocks and radiating glazing bars.

**7.4** The key historic asset within this area is Wandsworth Prison. This section describes the architectural detailing of the building. All three heritage assets were designed by architect D.R. Hill in 1849-51.

**Wandsworth Prison Doctor's House, northwest of main gate, Heathfield Road, London, SW18 3HX Grade II Listed (Ref: LB/071; Listed 07-04-1983):**

**7.5** This building is identical to Governor's House with the composition reversed.

## 8 Public Realm and Green Space

**8.1** From a pedestrian point of view, this character area offers immense variety in terms of the contrasting language of the prison and residential properties nearby. The hierarchy of transport is mixed – cars tend to dominate (mainly around the prison) causing some conflict with pedestrians and cyclists. The character of Alma Terrace to some extent is compromised, as it tends to act popular route through to Trinity Road.

**8.2** Whilst there have been examples of modern (mostly household) developments in the area, generally, there are few properties that have undergone poor quality alterations – a sensitive attitude towards altering properties seems to be adopted. The prison has had several developments, most of which affecting those areas away from public facades.

**8.3** This part of the conservation area as a whole is generally well maintained, with few aspects detracting from the significance of designation. However, where detracting aspects may occur it is mainly to do with issues such as - inappropriately installed satellite dishes, the excessive use of Close-circuit Television (CCTV) and other security measures on the facades and boundaries of the prison; for residential properties, it is the removal of original features such as, boundary detailing, front doors and original windows and the inappropriate installation of satellite dishes. No real loss of private gardens has occurred as parking is generally catered for on street.

## 9 Introduction

**9.1** This Management Strategy is not just about the Council preserving the special character of your Conservation Area through planning controls, but is also about how you as a resident or a business can make it a more attractive place to be in. It is also designed to give practical advice on conservation area status.

**9.2** Conservation area status is a planning tool put in place to help preserve or reinstate the original features that give the Conservation Area its special character. Any change to the original appearance to your home, which makes it stand out against the grain of its neighbours, will inevitably harm the appearance of the group of which it is a component part. The cumulative effect of these changes in turn harms the appearance of the area as a whole.

## 10 Issues

**10.1** The area as a whole is generally well maintained. There have been some alterations to properties and as a whole these do not tend to have a significant impact on the character of the area contextually. Despite the positive features and characteristics of the area, there are some negative aspects and problems. These problems are highlighted in this section. There have been a significant number of small-scale alterations to individual properties, which disrupt the cohesive appearance of groups based on their composition as a single entity.

**10.2** The removal of original features, changes to windows and doors, boundary detailing and the insensitive installation of satellite dishes (particularly those dominating the Prison)

1. Satellite dishes erected upon elevations visible from the highway detract from the appearance of the individual properties themselves, their neighbours, and the area as a whole.
2. The replacement of some original features e.g. changes to windows and doors and front boundary hedges with arbitrary timber fences. The streets have a mixture of boundary treatments and this is sometimes detrimental to the uniform appearance of the area, especially with the loss of front gardens to vehicle hardstandings.

## 11 Enhancement

### What you can do

**11.1** Conservation area status and the retention or reinstatement of the original features increases the value of the houses on the Wandsworth Common Sub Area e). So please retain the original appearance of your house.

### Repair original features

**11.2** Whenever possible repair original features such as timber windows and doors rather than replace them. It is possible to replace rotten components, draught-proof or install secondary glazing at a fraction of the price of replacing original windows. Repair work does not require planning permission.

### Reinstate original features

**11.3** If you are planning any changes to your home including changes to your windows, doors, or roof covering please follow this step-by-step guide.

### Repair & Reinstate windows

**11.4** To the benefit of the conservation area many of the original windows and doors survive unharmed today. However, some have been lost and replacements are often unsympathetic to the original design or material. It would enhance the Conservation Area enormously if when replacing windows, replicas of the original in terms of material and design are reinstated. It is very difficult to replicate some of the intricate timber window styles evident across the conservation area in PVCu and where possible one should replace windows in the original material – timber.

**11.5** When replacing windows and doors one must consider the following, does the replacement window match the original in terms of the: -

- Opening mechanisms
- Profile and proportions; and the
- Pattern and design of glazing bars

**11.6** Those living within a semi-detached pair, terrace or a large house converted into flats should consider the effect of their replacement windows upon the property or the terrace as a whole. When making changes to your property please be aware of the effect these changes upon the wider conservation area. Where windows, doors or other joinery features have been replaced with inappropriate designs, these can be restored to the original appearance, both enhancing the streetscene and adding value and character to the individual house.

## 12 Supplementary Guidance - Further Reading

### Council Guidance

**12.1** The following supplementary guidance has been produced by the council and is available on the website [www.wandsworth.gov.uk](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk) or on request please call (020) 8871 6646.

- Do it in Style – a guide to the care, repair and adaptation of your home.
- Making More of Your Loft – design guidance on altering your roof
- What is a Conservation Area? – information on Conservation Areas in general
- Tree Strategy for the Borough – the action plan for trees in the Borough
- Hardstandings – design guide on appropriate hardstandings

### Government Guidance

**12.2** This has been published by central government and is available on planning portal - [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk) or on request from the Council.

- Planning a Guide for Householders - What you need to know about the planning system; a guide to permitted development rights.
- A Householder's Planning Guide – for the installation of Antennas, including Satellite Dishes.

### Further reading

- Period House – How to repair and restore your home English Heritage Collins 2005
- [www.london.gov.uk/assembly/scrutiny/environment.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/scrutiny/environment.jsp)

## 13 Planning Controls as a result of Conservation Area status

### Works to Trees

**13.1** Works to any tree in the Conservation Area: Before carrying out any work to any tree in a conservation area it is necessary to serve a notice to the council six weeks before you intend to do the work - this includes any kind of work whether it is just minor pruning through to complete removal. If you want to remove a tree completely, be sure to give the reasons why. The notice period is six weeks. To serve a notice you can fill out a form entitled - 'Application to carry out work to a tree in a conservation area.' You can write a letter or an email.

**13.2** This must include; the address of property where tree is located, the proposed works to the tree, the type of tree (if known) and whether it is in the front or back garden.

### Satellite dishes

**13.3** For information on the regulations governing the size and location of satellite dishes please see, 'A Householders Planning Guide for the installation of Antennas, including Satellite Dishes'.

### Demolition

**13.4** You will need to apply for Conservation Area Consent to totally or substantially demolish any structures bigger than 115 cubic metres or higher than 1m fronting the road. The council has a presumption in favour of retaining buildings that contribute to the character of the Wandsworth Common Sub Area e) Conservation Area. Anyone who wishes to demolish a building must produce convincing reasons why they want to.

**13.5** The proposed redevelopment of the site will be a material factor in deciding whether to give consent for demolition; this will normally only be granted subject to planning permission for redevelopment being granted, and a contract for carrying out the works having been signed, where these are required.

### Front boundaries

**13.6** If you wish to erect or add to a fence that is more than 1 metre high and facing a highway (this includes a pavement or footpath) you will need to apply for planning permission.



## 14 Planning Applications - Council Policy

### Application Forms

**14.1** All application forms are available on the website <http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/EnvironmentandTransport/PlanningService/Planningapplications/plappforms.htm> or on request, just contact the planning department (see contact details below). To apply for a planning application it necessary to complete the form and submit scale drawings showing the existing and the proposed For applications to replace doors or windows, it is possible to include a photograph to show the existing, but the drawing for the proposed must be to scale of either 1:50 or 1:100. It must show how the window will open and close this is best shown in a cross section. For an example of the drawings required please see Appendix 3.

### Planning Applications – Council Policy

**14.2** Any development, large or small, should be carried out in a way that does not harm the area's special character. This means understanding and respecting what makes the Wandsworth Common Sub Area e) Conservation Area special in the first place see 'Character Analysis'.

**14.3** To help with this we welcome and encourage discussions before you submit your application. A planner will be available at the One-Stop reception on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Town Hall to discuss, with any resident of the borough or local business, proposals to alter or extend their property and, if planning permission is required, how it can be obtained. Simple enquiries can be dealt with by telephone. Confidentiality within the council will be respected.

**14.4** Planning applications are determined using national and local policy. Wandsworth Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in 2003 sets out the Local policies used to determine planning applications. Policies TBE10 & TBE11 apply specifically to Conservation Areas. Policy H4 is also important as it relates to proposals to extend or alter residential properties.

**14.5** It takes eight weeks to process a householder planning application or conservation area consent listed building consent. When the application is received it is allocated to a planning officer in Development Control, this planning officer will be your case officer. You the applicant or your agent can contact your case officer at anytime. If you have an agent correspondence will be automatically conducted with the agent unless otherwise requested.

**14.6** If the correct information is not provided the application will not be validated, your agent or you the applicant will be notified of this within 10 days of the case officer receiving the application.

**14.7** The 8-week period starts on the date of validation. Within this time the application will be advertised and anyone can comment on your application, if applicable other departments of the Council will also be consulted this often includes Conservation and Design.

### **Building Control**

**14.8** If you want to do new building work you will probably need building regulations approval. If you want advice on this, phone (020) 8871 7620.

## **15 Contact List**

Development Control 020 8871 7657

Conservation & Design 020 8871 6646

Enforcement 020 8871 6643

Building Regulations 020 8871 7620

Website [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning)

Email [boroughplanner@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:boroughplanner@wandsworth.gov.uk)

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